



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Office of the Regional Archaeologist

Savannah Coastal Refuges

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September 20, 1999

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Biologist

Mr. Roger Walker, Review and Compliance Officer
Mississippi Department of Archives and History
P.O. Box 571
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0571

Dear Mr. Walker:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes to stabilize five abandoned houses and hunting camps at St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Adams County. The houses currently serve as roosting areas for small colonies of Rafinesque's big-eared bats (*Plecotus rafinesquii*), a poorly known species formerly listed as a Category Two species by the Service. On June 16 and 18, 1999, I examined the structures to determine their eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Four of the structures were determined ineligible due to their recent construction date and style. However, one house - "the White House" - was deemed potentially eligible under Criteria C and D. To facilitate your review and comment, I have enclosed copies of Hall's 1998 **Artificial Habitat Stabilization Project to Benefit the Rafinesque's Big-Eared Bat (*Plecotus rafinesquii*) on St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Sibley, MS** and a completed Region 4 Architectural History and Historic Narrative form for the "White House." The results of the historic structure assessments are summarized below.

The Rafinesque's big-eared bat is one of the least known species of bats in the eastern United States. The species is a medium-sized bat with large ears often more than an inch in length. It can be distinguished from other similar species, such as the Ozark big-eared bat (*Plecotus townsendii ingens*) and Virginia big-eared bat (*Plecotus townsendii virginianus*), by its nearly white underparts, strongly bicolored fur, its lumpy nose, and extra-long hair projecting between its toes, and its noticeable bicuspid first upper incisor. The latter two species are listed by the Service as endangered (50 CFR Part 17.11). The Rafinesque's big-eared bat is found through the southeastern United States from the Dismal Swamp in Virginia south and west through the coastal states to eastern Texas. Northern portion of its range encompasses southeastern Oklahoma and western and southern Arkansas up from the Mississippi River Valley to southern Illinois, southern Indiana, and western Kentucky. Isolated populations have been reported in southern Ohio, eastern Kentucky, and central West Virginia. Rafinesque's big-eared bats are permanent, but uncommon, residents throughout their range.

During the winter, these bats often rest in caves, mines, or similar habitats, such as cisterns, wells, and culverts. It is not a true hibernator, as it often is awake and active throughout the winter months. In the summer, females form maternity colonies consisting of a half-dozen to several dozen adults. Males are generally solitary during the nursing season and frequent buildings, and crevices behind loose bark and in hollow trees. This species prefer badly dilapidated buildings, such as the "White House," where rooms are partially lighted. Like the eastern pipistrelle, they prefer more open and lighted day roosts. The bat emerges in the late evening to forage on moths and other night-flying insects. It is easily agitated when disturbed in roosting areas or in maternity colonies - the bat begins to wave its ears in an attempt to identify or track the intruder, emitting a low, hoarse bark similar to a small dog, and perhaps taking flight.

Little information regarding reproduction is available for this species. Breeding apparently occurs during the fall and winter. A single pup is produced after maternity colonies are formed in the spring. The pups are born between late May through early June. They shed their milk dentition by mid-July and reach full-size and adult pelage by August or early September (Barbour and Davis 1969: 178-183; Burt and Grossenheider 1980: 42-42; Harvey, Altenbach, and Best 1999: 54).

Project Description

The Refuge recently discovered two maternity colonies and several solitary individuals in four of the five vacant houses and camps. This population represents the largest known community of Rafinesque's big-eared bats in the state, the only other known colony is at the Camp Shelby Training Site near Hattiesburg. The proposed habitat stabilization project is one portion of a larger comprehensive management plan being developed for the species on federal- and state-owned lands (Hall 1998: 2).

Three abandoned houses - the "White House," Brick House No. 1, and Brick House No. 2 - will undergo structural stabilization. Details of the proposed work is provided in Table 1. Two camps, both pre-fabricated buildings on wood posts, may undergo stabilization at a future date (Hall 1998: 11).

Table 1. Proposed Stabilization Project.

Structure	Proposed Work
"White House"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove collapsed back porch/ell. • Repair rear elevation upon removal of the back porch/ell. This work will be limited to re-nailing detached clapboards if possible and/or nailing sheets of plywood to those areas where clapboards are missing or beyond repair. • Repair damage to the roof was damaged by tornado by replacing missing corrugated metal sheets. • Stabilize roof dormer by installing wood bracing in the house's interior. • Install one steel door. • Install steel excluder devices on ground-floor windows and remaining door. The attic windows will remain unobstructed to provide access for the bats and other non-targeted species. • Remove fallen ceilings, rotten floors, and other accumulated flammable debris.

Brick House Nos. 1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair minor roof damage caused by neglect and storms. • Install a steel door in each house. • Replace side and garage storage doors with steel excluder devices . • Replace intact glass windows with plexiglass. • Install steel excluder devices over damaged window openings.
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Historic Structure Assessments

I conducted historic structure assessments of these structures on June 16 and 18, 1999. Brick House Nos. 1 and 2 are ranch-style dwellings built by Norman Haigh, the former owner of Sibley Farms. Mr. Haigh constructed these dwellings in the 1970s as housing for farm employees and/or tenants. Due to fairly recent construction and common architectural style, I determined that these structures did not meet any of the criteria for eligibility for inclusion on the National Register and that no further investigations were warranted.

Based upon the architectural style, manner of construction and limited oral history, the "White House" appears to be older than 50 years and therefore warranted further examination. On June 18th, I photographed the structure and drew a sketch plan of the first floor. The second floor or attic was inaccessible due to the presence of easily disturbed roosting females and their young. The Refuge's files were also examined for additional information regarding ownership and former land use. The results of the assessment are presented in the attached Region 4 Architectural History and Historical Narrative Form.

The "White House" tentatively meets Criteria C (Design/Construction) and D (Information Potential) and is potentially eligible for the National Register. Additional archival and documentary research and oral history interviews will be required to further define the structure's historic context. Archaeological testing around the structure has been recommended in order to ascertain the presence and integrity of associated cultural deposits.

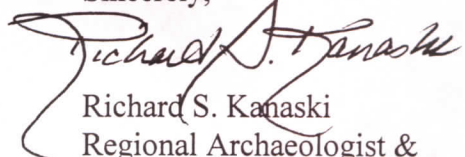
The proposed work will have "no effect" upon the structure. The work will stabilize the structure for continued use by the current, albeit unique, residents. Additional positive effects include the removal of flammable debris and increased Refuge presence to prevent vandalism and human disturbance.

Conclusions

I have determined that the Brick House Nos. 1 and 2 and the two prefabricated buildings do not meet the criteria for eligibility for the National Register due to their date of construction and architectural style. No further investigations nor consideration for these structures are warranted for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. I have determined that the "White House" is potentially eligible for the National Register pending further archival and archaeological investigations. However, the proposed work will have "no effect" on it. The work will stabilize the dilapidated and crumbling building and will remove flammable debris and other safety hazards. Continued use of the structure as a maternity colony will ensure continued maintenance. Additional documentary and archaeological investigations are slated to be conducted in the immediate future.

I would appreciate your timely concurrence with the above findings as per 36 CFR Part 800.5(b). Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (912) 652-4415, ext. 113, or via email.

Sincerely,


Richard S. Kanaski
Regional Archaeologist &
Historic Preservation Officer

Attachments

cc: Hall, St. Catherine Creek NWR
Currie, Ecological Services, Ashville Field Office

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, REGION 4

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY AND HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

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Site Name "White House;" Bat House No. 1

Survey Date June 18, 1999

[Luella Hamilton House]

Site Address York Plantation, Lot No. 4

State Mississippi

County Adams

Quad Sheet Buck Island, MS-LA

Date 1988

Zone 15

UTM Coordinates

Northing 3470490

Easting 649780

Site Owner: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Name St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge

Address P.O. Box 68
Sibley, Mississippi 39165

Type of Ownership Fee Simple

Recording Date

Architect if known

Builder if known

Style and/or Period Greek Revival (Photographs 1 - 4, 15 & 16).

Plan Type Rectangular Massed Plan - Side-Gabled with Central Hall (Floorplan).

Orientation North-South (Gable Ends)

Foundation Brick Piers (Photograph 5). Diamond-shaped lattice work set between piers (Photograph 6).

Structural System(s) Wood Frame

Exterior Fabric(s) Wood clapboards (attached with wire nails) [Photographs 8 & 17].

Roof Type Side-Gabled and covered by corrugated sheet metal. Common Rafter System overlain by lattices. Slight eave overhang with wide divided cornice band. The extended rear shed ell is covered by asphalt shingles (Photographs 1 - 3, & 15).

Secondary Roof Structure(s) Pedimented gable center dormer with clapboard sidewalls. The dormer has two 2/2 sash windows (Photograph 1).

Chimneys - Pair of interior brick chimneys - Ridge placement. The fireplaces open into the four

main rooms. Square firebox; mantles have been removed (Photograph 12).

Porches Full facade shed porch along the front elevation; the main entry and porch are further defined by a smaller projecting triangular pedimented gable porch with steps. A sun burst pattern can be seen in the pediment - it matches the ones seen in the dormer's and the bay's pediments, and in the gable's ends just beneath the eaves (Photograph 1). The porch's decking is constructed tongue & groove 1-inch x 4-inch boards. Square vernacular columns with simple Doric capitals and square pilasters support the porches' roofs (Photographs 5, 7, & 8). The columns do not have bases. A similar full facade porch may have once graced the opposing facade, but removed when the shed ell was constructed (see below).

Exterior Doors Unknown, but both front and back single doors are surrounded by a broken transom light and $\frac{2}{3}$ side lights set in a simple entablature (Photograph 9). A raised panel is set in bottom third of each side light. A secondary exit is present in rear shed ell and is located on north gable facade (Photograph 2).

Windows Symmetrical arrangement of 2/2 double hung sash windows in the older portion of house (Photograph 1). The parlor has a projecting bay composed of three 2/2 double hung sash windows. The bay has a triangular pediment with central sun burst decorative pattern and a gable roof covered by corrugated metal sheets (Photograph 10). One 6/6 double sash window is located below the eaves of each gable. These windows are separated from the decorative sun burst pattern by a horizontal trim piece. A pair of 6/6 double hung sash windows are located in the shed ell on the north gable end (Photograph 11). Shutter hardware indicates that shutters were once present. The fenestration of the west elevation was altered with the construction of the shed ell - they were either blocked (rear bedroom) or modified into an interior connecting door (old kitchen).

Interior

Floor - Tongue and groove planks.

Walls - Narrow tongue and groove boards separated by a wainscot in the hall, kitchen, and parlor. Boards below the wainscot run vertically; above it they run horizontally. No wainscot is present in the other two rooms. Here the tongue and groove boards run vertically from floor to ceiling. Each room has wide flat baseboards (Photograph 12).

Miscellaneous Circular brick well located north of house and near rear door of shed ell addition (Photograph 13). Concrete stucco has been applied to the well's exterior. Metal lid on well. The manufacturer's mark is stamped on the lid -

C.B. CHURCHILL & C^O.
NATCHEZ, MISS.
1859

(Photograph 14).

After the addition of the shed ell, PVC pipes were installed to drain the bathroom, shower, and kitchen.

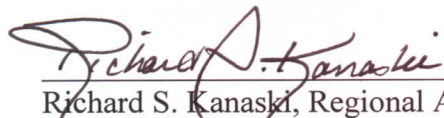
National Register Status

Potentially Eligible

Narrative

The house appears to have been built in the mid-late 19th century, a conclusion supported by the 1859 date on the well cover. The shed ell was added in the early-mid 20th century based upon an examination of the materials used for construction. The undated tract plat (Map 2) shows that the house was built on top of a "mound" and raises the possibility that an earlier Native American occupation lays beneath the historic archaeological deposits. Additional documentary research (deeds, maps) and oral history interviews (Norman Haigh, former owner of Sibley Farms) need to be conducted and will provide more definitive information regarding the site's owners, land use patterns, and dates of construction/modification.

Recorder: Name and Title



(signature)

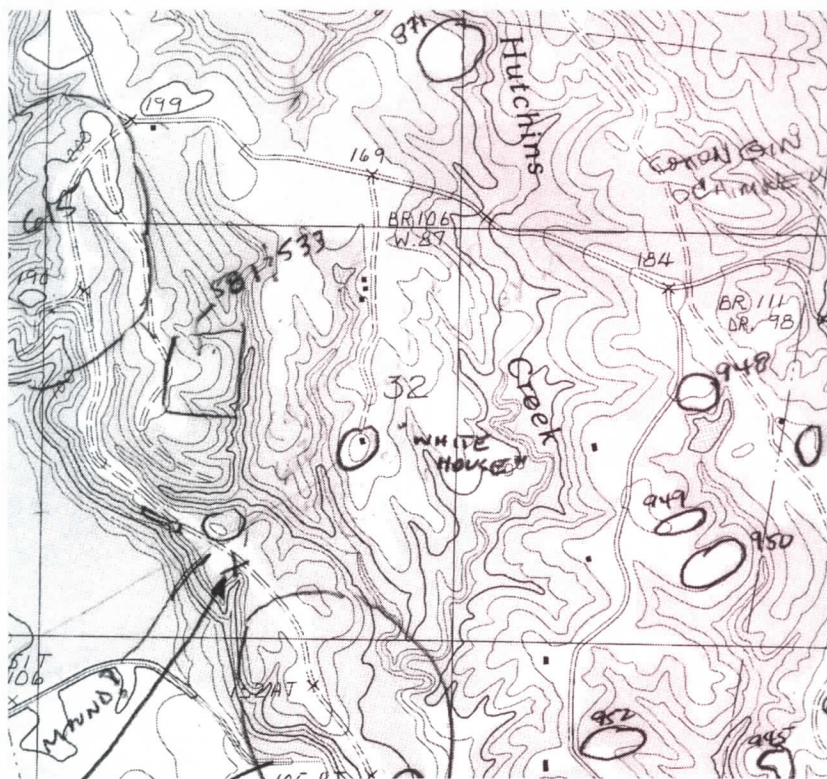
Richard S. Kanaski, Regional Archaeologist & Historic
Preservation Officer - Region 4

Address

Savannah Coastal Refuges
1000 Business Center Drive, Suite 10
Savannah, Georgia 31405

Date: September 20, 1999

Quad Sheet



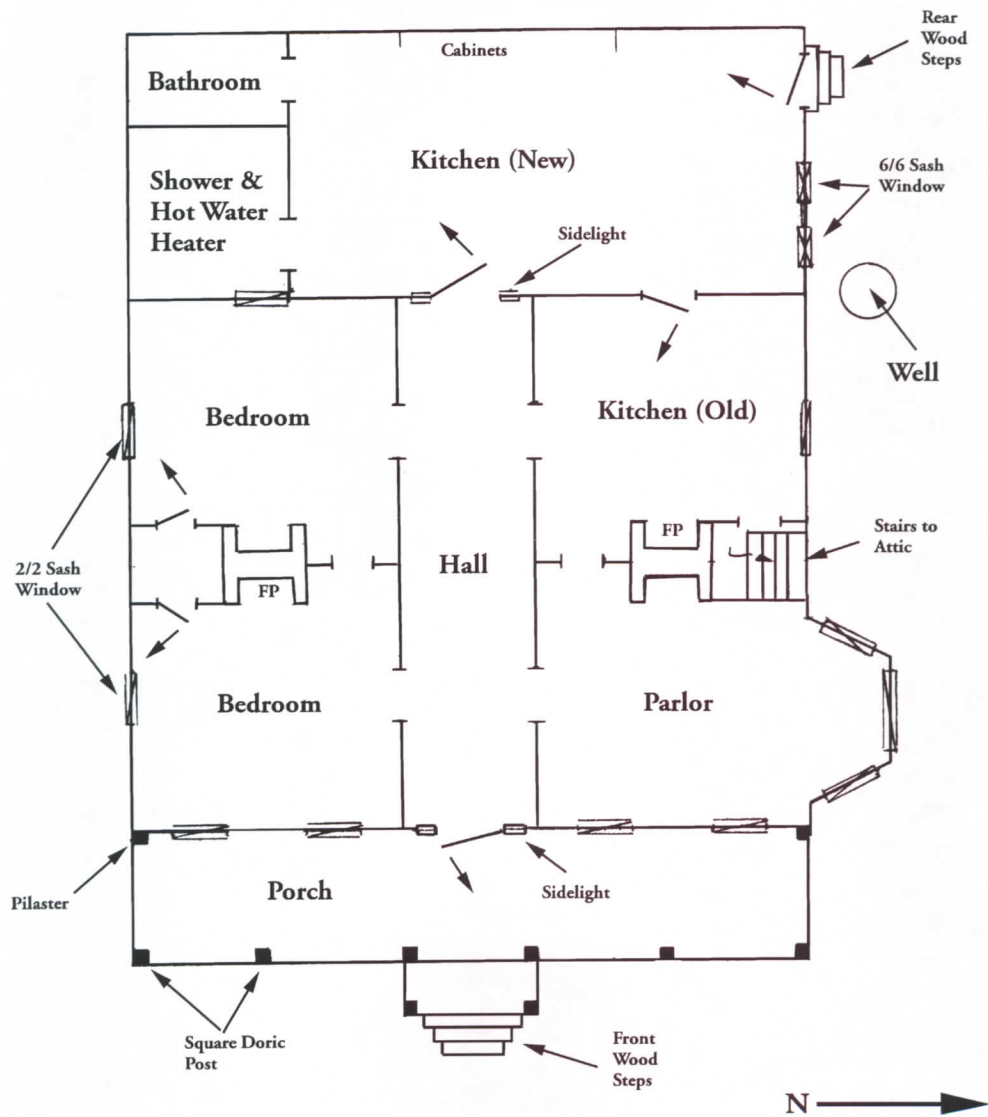
Buck Island, MS-LA (7.5 minute series quadrangle)

Plat Map



Section from an undated plat map of York and Bourbon Plantations which shows the location of the "White House" (St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge: n.d.).

Floorplan



First Floor of "White House." Not to Scale.

Second floor (attic) as stairs leading to this portion of the house were inaccessible due to the presence of roosting bats in the "old" kitchen.

Photographs

Photographer Richard S. Kanaski
Subject Historic Structure Assessment of "White House"
Location St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Sibley, Mississippi
Film Type Fujicolor - ASA 200
Date June 18, 1999

1. "White House" - Front (East) Elevation.
2. "White House" - North Elevation.
3. Northwest corner. Note poor condition of extended shed ell, the central portion of which has collapsed. Several sheets of corrugated metal have slid off the older portion of the house.
4. Southwest corner.
5. Brick pier. Note tongue and groove board decking of porch and the insect-and water-damaged sills.
6. Lattice beneath house.
7. Square vernacular columns with simple Doric capitals support the porch.
8. Square pilaster and eave details, northeast corner.
9. Main entry flanked by a broken transom light and $\frac{2}{3}$ sidelights.
10. Parlor bay with triangular pedimented gable roof and trio of $\frac{2}{2}$ double hung sash windows. A $\frac{6}{6}$ double hung sash window located just below the eaves can be seen in upper right corner.
11. $\frac{6}{6}$ double hung sash window in extended shed ell, north elevation.
12. Fireplace in the "old" kitchen. Note the doorway and stairs which lead to the attic.
13. Circular brick well.
14. Manufacturer's mark on the well's cover.
15. Shed ell, west elevation. Note that the ell's roof is covered with asphalt shingles and not corrugated metal sheets.
16. Shed ell, southwest corner.
17. Clapboards of the shed ell (north elevation) separating from the older portion of the house.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 1. "White House" - Front (East Elevation).

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 2. "White House" - North Elevation.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 3. Northwest corner. Note poor condition of extended shed ell, the central portion of which has collapsed. Several sheets of corrugated metal have slid off the older portion of the house.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



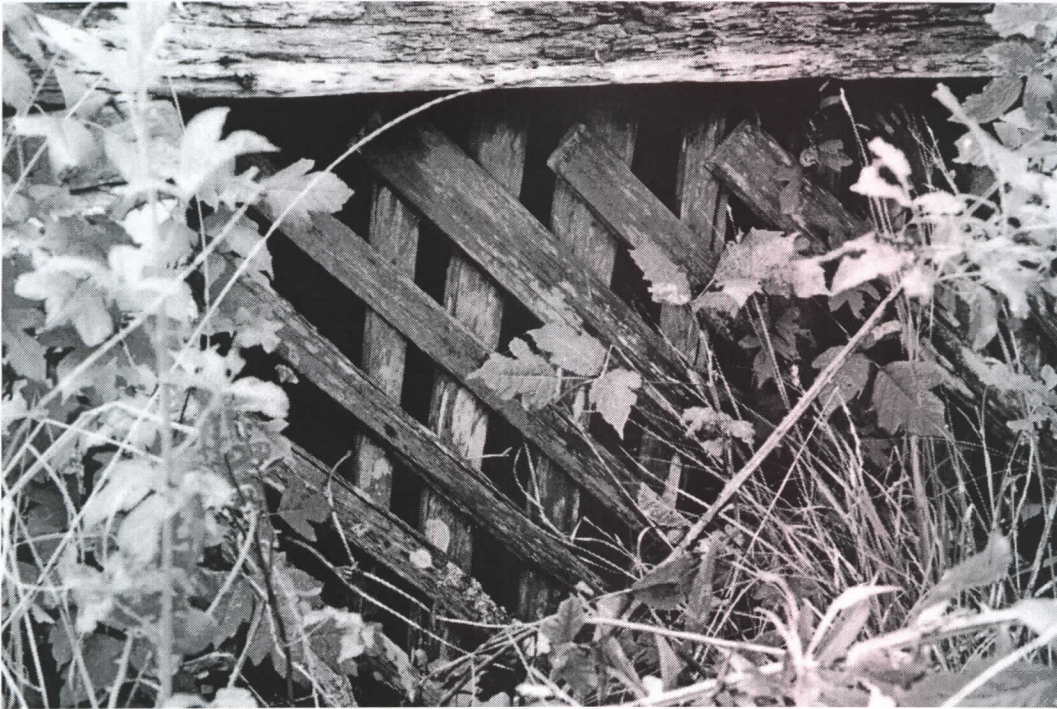
Photograph 4. Southwest corner.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 5. Brick pier. Note tongue and groove board decking of the porch and the insect- and water-damaged sills.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



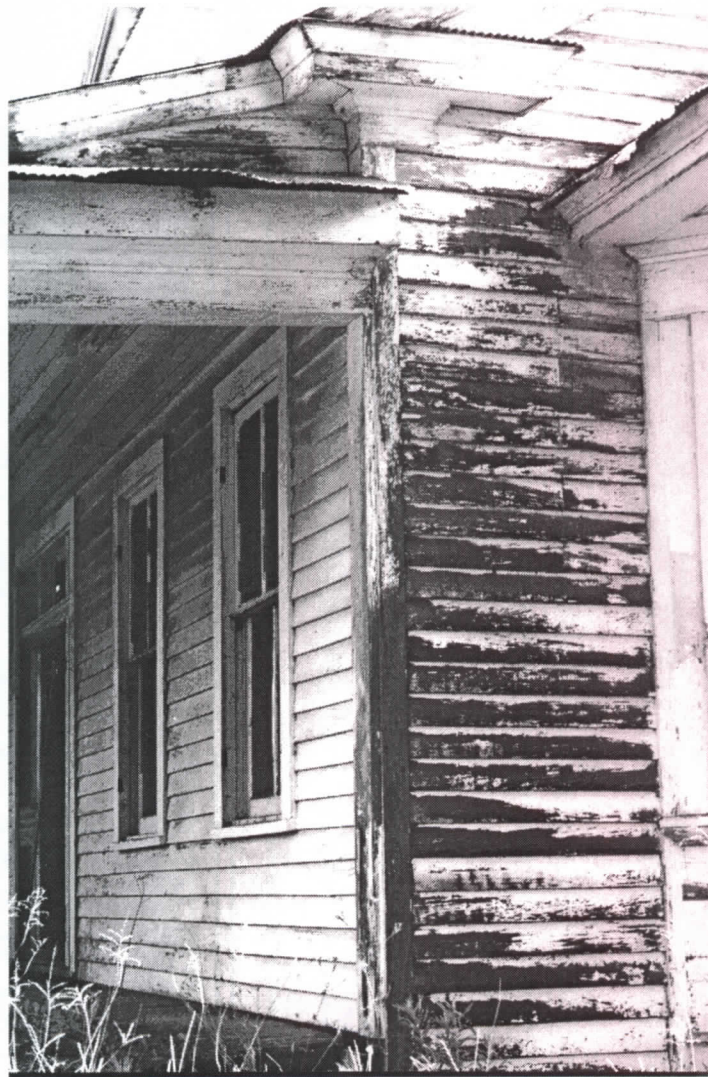
Photograph 6. Lattice beneath house.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 7. Square vernacular columns with simple Doric capitals support the porch.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 8. Square pilaster and eave details, northeast corner.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 9. Main entry flanked by a broken transom light and $\frac{2}{3}$ sidelights.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 10. Parlor bay with triangular pedimented gable roof and trio of 2/2 double hung sash windows. A 6/6 double hung sash window located just below the eaves can be seen in the upper right corner.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 11. 6/6 double hung sash window in extended shed ell, north elevation.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 12. Fireplace in the "old kitchen." Note the doorway and stairs which lead to the attic.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 13. Circular brick well.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 14. Manufacturer's mark on the well's cover.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 15. Shed ell, west elevation. Note that the ell's roof is covered with asphalt shingles and not corrugated metal sheets.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 16. Shed ell, southwest corner.

"White House"
St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge
Adams County, Sibley, Mississippi



Photograph 17. Clapboards of the shed ell (north elevation) separating from the older portion of the house.

References

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

1999 Fieldnotes for Historic Structure Assessment of "White House," St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Adams County, Mississippi. On file at the Office of the Regional Archaeologist, Savannah Coastal Refuges, Savannah, Georgia.

U.S. Geological Survey

1988 *Buck Island, MS-LA*. 7.5 minutes series.

St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge

1993 St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Area - Ownership Map, Adams and Wilkinson Counties, Mississippi. On file at St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Sibley, Mississippi.

n.d. Plat map of York & Bourbon Plantations. From, *Adams County Deed Book 73* (New Series)[Book 22, in Old Series], Page 17. On file at St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Sibley, Mississippi.